

can. I doubt it, but even in cases where this is true, pay problems certainly affect retention.

It may sometimes seem like the people in charge of paying the troops just don't care. (Parachute riggers take a vow that they will jump with any parachute they have packed. If they have made a mistake, they will pay for it. Perhaps pay personnel should take a similar vow—if they make an error in a soldier's pay, the amount will come out of their pay until it's corrected.)

But as a commander, you have to care. If "the commander is responsible for everything his men do or fail to do," then you are responsible if one of your people fails to get paid. And so is everybody else

in the chain of command. You have to force the issue and go to the next higher commander, if necessary, and your First Sergeant should also be helping and pushing. Active or Reserve, if there is a pay problem, it's got to be fixed, and fixed fast.

These, then, are my Three M's—Meals, Mail, Money. There are certainly other things a commander must do to take care of his people, but I firmly believe that if you keep these three areas straight, you will have gone a long way toward establishing credibility with your troops. You will have troops who will do anything for you, will follow you anywhere, because you have demonstrated that you will do what you have to do to take care

of them. In short, you will have gone a long way toward creating a fourth M—Morale.

"Meals, Mail, and Money" is not just a cliché, and you mustn't let it become one. It's real and it's important. Maybe remembering the Three M's will help you remain conscious of more than just the slogan.

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The Company XO

CAPTAIN RICHARD D. HILL

In addition to providing "beans and bullets," a company executive officer (XO) has numerous other responsibilities and duties within a company—duties many of the soldiers in the company may not be aware of. In conjunction with the first sergeant and the commander, he provides those soldiers with the resources they need to conduct meaningful training in the field or in garrison.

A new company XO himself may not know the full extent of his duties. The Army has published many manuals, circulars, and pamphlets describing the duties of the company commander, the first sergeant, the squad leaders, and the platoon leaders. But no manual clearly defines the responsibilities and duties of the XO at the company level. The reason for this may be that many of an XO's duties in a company are prescribed by the

individual commander to fit his own requirements. But the basic duties and responsibilities of an XO do not change. (See also "Man Without A Manual: The Executive Officer," by Major John R. Galvin, *INFANTRY*, March-April 1965, pages 53-61, and "The Company XO," by Lieutenant Colonel John R. Galvin, *INFANTRY*, November-December 1969, pages 34-42.)

The XO can be the one person at company level who truly communicates the commander's policies and orders. The first sergeant and the platoon leaders also have a role in this, of course, but nobody has a closer relationship with the commander than the XO.

Since the XO is the senior lieutenant in the company and has probably worked with the chain of command for some time, he probably knows a great deal

about the first sergeant and the platoon sergeants and has come to know the platoon leaders through both professional and social interaction. And, as the senior lieutenant, he also probably has a feel for the commander's personality and the way he likes to conduct business. His input is essential to the commander's decision making process.

His advice to the platoon leaders is particularly important. They will come to him with ideas and suggestions before going to the commander. Some commanders make it a policy to have the platoon leaders brief the XO first on a training plan or presentation to smooth any rough edges before bringing it to him.

Knowing the commander's likes and dislikes, therefore, he can help steer the platoon leaders in the right direction. He can do this by holding informal sessions

with the platoon leaders and the functional area chiefs within the company. The commander will rely upon him heavily for advice in these areas.

The most common areas of responsibility for a company XO are maintenance, security, supply actions, ration control, accounting, and tactics. He will do well to make a list of these and keep it handy.

A new XO's first step after moving into the job should be to set aside some time with the commander and the first sergeant so that his areas of responsibility can be defined. A first sergeant is sometimes sensitive about having a young lieutenant step into his territory, no matter how well-meaning the lieutenant might be. And in this meeting, the XO can learn what the commander expects him to do to support the company's goals.

Most commanders have only a limited amount of time to spend on such administrative matters as ordering rations or scheduling training areas. These requirements are no less important than the tactical deployment of the company, however, so they are areas in which the XO can take some of the pressure off his commander.

PRIORITIES

After meeting with the commander and the first sergeant, it is time for the XO to take the list of duties into his office and establish some priorities. His priority list of roles and duties might look something like this:

- Second in command.
- Unit Fund Manager/Council Representative.
- Dining Facility Accountable Officer (company facility).
- Schedule training areas.
- Motor maintenance officer.
- Class I, III, IV, and IX manager.
- Prepare DD Forms 2406 and 2407.
- Unit calibrations officer.
- Physical security officer.
- Tactically employ the combat trains.
- Attend battalion plans meeting.
- Unit load planner/logistician.
- Review unit short range and long range training plan.

In areas outside the continental United

States, the following would be added to this list:

- Rations control officer.
- Payroll officer.
- Maneuver damage control officer.

The easiest way to accomplish all of these tasks and the others the XO may be assigned is for him to develop a simple and logical system that gives him easy access to the information he needs.

To keep track of reports, the XO should prepare a notebook that outlines the requirements for each, including how often it must be submitted and to whom. This will allow him to prepare reports on time and will also help his successor in the job. This notebook does not have to be anything elaborate. For example, it can be as simple as a large three-ring binder that includes sample reports and the documentation needed to support them.

SECOND BINDER

As a company XO, I found it helpful also to prepare a second binder that held the following information:

- Current company strength roster by name, duty position, rank, and social security number.
- Serial numbers and types of weapons.
- Current unit DD Form 2406 reports.
- Current logistical support requirements—training areas, ammunition, rations.
- Special reports.
- Deferred maintenance on vehicles.
- Serial numbers and types of radio equipment.
- Items reported on DD Forms 2406 and 2407.
- Class IX items on order.
- Current calendar of activities.

This notebook allowed me to see my company's status and requirements at a glance. I took it with me to all battalion and company meetings and updated it as needed.

Although there is no formal staff at company level to help the XO, he does have at his disposal the knowledge and experience of the first sergeant and the functional area chiefs (communications,

supply, NBC, and armorer). He should take advantage of their knowledge and make it work for him.

Once a week, the company commander will probably hold a company training meeting. It is from these meetings that the XO will receive an analysis of the current training as well as guidance for the next few weeks of training. During this meeting, the XO should brief the commander on the available resources for that training.

From the rough draft training schedule the commander gives him, he can then begin his logistical planning. He will now know what training areas and ammunition are needed by type and what additional support is needed from the battalion staff. Once he has developed a final packet of request documents, he can present them to the battalion support agencies. He will work closely with the battalion XO, whose primary function is coordinating the efforts of the battalion staff to support the goals of the battalion commander and the needs of the companies.

MEETINGS

The battalion XO normally conducts weekly meetings with the company XOs and the battalion staff agencies to complete training support plans and special activities. At these meetings a company XO can air all of his concerns about support that is needed or support that has been rendered.

He will also work closely with the battalion support platoon leader and NCO, who will give him additional transportation assets, Class III, IV, and VI supplies, and sometimes Class I supplies as well. In addition, the XO should develop a close working relationship with the battalion S-1, S-2, S-3, S-4, fire support officer, motor officer, chaplain, senior medic, and PA.

The company XO's goal in this process is always to transform the training his commander envisions into a logistically supported reality.

Once all the support requests have been submitted and all the plans made final, it is time for the XO to put his plans to

the test and move the company to the field. A considerable amount of this work is done, of course, by the company chain of command (platoon leaders, platoon sergeants, and squad leaders), but it is the XO's implied responsibility to ensure that everything goes smoothly. These responsibilities include making sure of the following:

- The equipment is loaded on vehicles.
- All of the sensitive items are inventoried.
- Maintenance is conducted on all vehicles.
- Reconnaissance is conducted on all routes.
- The communications equipment is operational.
- The commander's jeep is loaded and the heater works.
- All elements move on time.
- The appropriate classes of supply are available and packed.
- The training areas have been coordi-

nated with the adjacent units.

- The command post and the combat trains are functional.

Once the unit arrives at the field site, it is the XO's responsibility, with the help of the first sergeant, to make sure the combat trains are set up properly. He can then turn the logistical aspects of training over to the first sergeant and the supply sergeant and focus his own attention on tactics.

He now becomes an integral part of the tactical plan, and the commander will brief the XO thoroughly on his intent and the concept of the operation so that the XO can be placed where he can best influence the outcome of the battle, or step in at the decisive point and continue the battle in the commander's absence.

The tactical plan itself will largely govern the way the commander uses the XO in the field. Even if he assumes a tactical role, however, the XO is still responsible for coordinating with the battalion

tactical operations center, the forward area support team, and the battalion trains to see that reports are submitted and the flow of logistical support continues.

Along with the company motor sergeant, he must also request prescribed load list items and keep a close eye on company maintenance. If the first sergeant is not with the company, the XO must keep him and the supply sergeant abreast of the tactical situation so they can respond to the company's needs with logistical support packages.

Wherever the XO is used on the battlefield, though, he is always the second in command, the combat executive officer.

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Soviet Snipers

EDITOR'S NOTE: This article is another in a recurring series prepared from unclassified sources by the Threat Division, Directorate of Intelligence and Security, U.S. Army Infantry Center, at Fort Benning.

The Soviets have used snipers successfully in the past and plan to use them in the future. During World War II, they formed entire companies of snipers and killed thousands of Germans.

Today, snipers are selected by company commanders from their best marksmen, and each motorized rifle platoon in a motorized rifle regiment has a sniper. For this job, the Soviets favor soldiers who have excellent vision and hearing, good memory, and quick reactions.

Sniper training is conducted periodically and lasts from six weeks to two months. Most of this training is aimed at ensuring that the snipers will perform properly in combat.

The sniper targets mentioned in the Soviet military press include enemy snipers, officers, forward observers, antitank crews, machinegunners, crews of disabled tanks, and low-flying helicopters. Initially, Soviet snipers concentrate on any targets that may be delaying their attacking units. The platoon leader gives the sniper the priority targets.

A sniper is usually paired with an observer, and this sniper team takes up covered and concealed firing positions. In the defense, the motorized platoon commander gives the sniper his missions and also identifies his primary and

reserved firing positions.

A Soviet sniper must meet the following standards:

- Know his weapon, maintain it in working order, and fire it accurately.
- Observe the battlefield.
- Evaluate targets and engage the most important ones.
- Use the terrain properly for cover and concealment and position himself close to enemy positions.

The Soviets' sniper rifle is the 7.62mm Dragunov (SVD), and they have one sniper rifle per motorized rifle platoon. The SVD is a gas-operated semiautomatic weapon with a detachable box magazine and a combination flash suppressor and compensator that helps reduce the muzzle jump and flash. The standard bayonet fits on the SVD.